

FOLK HOUSES

“Folk” is a broad term that encompasses several styles of homes that may bear little superficial resemblance to one another. Folk houses are perhaps the most commonly built houses in America. The term generally refers to smaller, simpler homes built for average citizens. Folk houses may incorporate, in varying degrees, elements of recognizable styles, such as Victorian, Tudor or Colonial, but usually lack the elaboration that characterizes true examples of these styles. Folk is the most common style of house in Barrington’s Historic Preservation Overlay District.

Many Folk houses are primarily categorized by their basic configuration. Examples are Gable Front, Gabled Ell and American Foursquare configurations.

Among folk houses, some styles have become recognizable to the degree that they have attained recognition as separate styles. The Craftsman (also called Bungalow) style is perhaps the most familiar example, and this style is treated separately in its own section.

Folk Example #1: Gabled Ell House (548 S. Grove Avenue)



The Gabled Ell shape of this Folk house, built ca. 1900, is easily discernable. The house is very simple, with minimal ornamentation. The house retains its original two-over-two double hung windows, but the original siding has been covered with vinyl siding and the original porch has been removed. There is a large addition to the rear of the original structure.

Folk Example #2: Gabled Ell House (305 S. Cook Street)



This home has several common Folk characteristics: the Gabled Ell shape is easily recognizable, and there is not an excess of ornamentation. The windows are double hung, with six-over-six sashes, with a simple trim typical of Folk houses. Note the wood lap siding with corner board trims. The porch is tucked into the corner of the ell. This house is also shown to demonstrate its addition. The very large addition has been added to the rear of the structure, which preserves the original Gabled ell appearance at the streetscape. The decorative trim on the porch shows Victorian influence.

Folk Example #3: American Foursquare House (309 S. Grove Avenue)



The basic shape of the Folk house is square (or nearly so), with a hip roof that is very nearly pyramidal. Hip roofed front-facing dormers and hip roofed full-width front porches are frequently seen in these houses.

Folk Example #4: American Foursquare House (616 S. Grove Avenue)



This home is an example of an American Foursquare Folk house with details that are influenced by other architectural styles. Principally, the pedimented arched front entry porch supported on columns, the Palladian window directly above it and the modillions at the eaves show Colonial Revival influence.

Folk Example #5: Gable Front House (200 W. Lincoln Avenue)



The basic gable-front shape of this Folk house is a complemented by a full-width front porch supported by simple Tuscan columns with milled balusters for the railing. The original windows are two-over-two double hung.

Craftsman

The Craftsman style (sometimes called “Bungalow”) was popularized in America primarily due to the influence of the Greene brothers, architects from California who took much of their inspiration from the Arts and Crafts movement in England. This style of house was extremely popular in America from just after the turn of the century until the 1920’s.

The Craftsman style is typically characterized by a side-facing gable roof that often extends (with a lower pitch) over a full-width front porch. Roof overhangs are usually supported on decorative triangular brackets. Sometimes the porch roof will be a front-facing gable. Porch columns are usually somewhat massive and often sit on tapered bases. The front porch railing is often a closed “knee wall” rather than an open balustrade. Siding is typically stucco, wood lap, or shingles. Often, a front-facing dormer is included in the roof.

Example #1 of a Craftsman House (118 W. Lake Street)



This Craftsman house features traditional side-facing gables and a front-facing dormer. The entry porch is supported on massive tapered square columns. The columns are supported on relatively massive tapered brick pedestals. The porch knee wall and exposed triangular gable roof supports are classic features of this style.

Example #2 of a Craftsman House (223 Applebee Street)



Note the massive tapered piers upon which the square columns rest. The windows in the front gable are original three-over-one double hung.

Example #3 of a Craftsman House (418 S. Hough Street)



Here the style is executed in brick, but retains many of the characteristics shown in the previous examples. Note the exposed rafter ends common in this style.